

# EPHRAIM AND NANCY ELIZABETH BETHERS SMITH



Ephraim Smith was born in September, 1833, in Tennessee, son of Richard and Diana Bragtal.

He married Nancy Elizabeth Bethers on September 28, 1852, and they were parents of 12 children.

Ephraim died on December 28, 1898.

Nancy died on September 4, 1931.

She was a daughter of Zadock S. and Sarah Collins Bethers. She moved to Council Bluffs and was there six years before leaving for Utah in the fall of 1852 with her parents in the Joseph Cuthouse company.

Sarah Collins Bethers, the mother, was a weaver, so she brought her spinning wheel and looms, also wool, yarn and thread. Sarah and her daughters, Mary Jane and Nancy Elizabeth, carded the wool, spun thread and wove cloth from which clothing for all the family was made. Pioneers around St. George planted cotton and flax from seed they brought with them, and they sent some of these products to the weavers in Heber to be used in weaving cloth.

Nancy's sister, Mary Jane, and Asa B

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York were married on her (Nancy's) wedding day, at Provo, by James E. Snow.

Ephraim's parents crossed the plains to Utah in 1850. His mother walked the entire distance, because she was afraid of buffalo stampeding through the wagon trains.

In 1860, Ephraim and Nancy, with their family, moved to Heber City, where they built a log cabin and later a large cabin used as a fort to protect women and children. Indians were very bad. They stole cattle and horses and then brought them back, demanding money for them. They stole and returned one of Ephraim's horses five times. The last time he refused to give them money.

This condition finally became intolerable, so the matter was taken up with Brigham Young by Ephraim Smith, who stated that it was absolutely necessary that something be done to stop this depredation. A meeting between the whites and Indians was called. Chief Tabby and some of his braves came in and camped at Ephraim's place. Nancy and other women cooked for them.

At the meeting the Indians were told that if they did not stop stealing, the settlers would have to call out the soldiers and the Indians would be killed. The Indians agreed not to steal any more and the "peace pipe" was passed to all present.

Ephraim had the first and only tannery in Heber. He learned his trade in Tennessee before coming to Utah. He stripped bark from oak trees in the canyons near Heber and hauled to the tannery. He used the Hopper mill to grind the bark, the first mill used to grind flour for the Smiths and others and was the only flour mill for some time. Mr. Smith employed five men at his tannery, making harnesses and shoes and mending shoes. He also made fiddles and violins.

When the Salt Lake Temple was started he sent a team to help in the work and he hauled sandstone rock from Heber for the foundation. He used a spirit level to level a canal which brought water from Provo River into the valley for irrigation purposes.

They were the parents of 12 children: David Ephraim, Hetty Esther Ann, Millie Jane, Joseph Marion, William Albert, James Andrew, Sarah Dinah, Thomas Edward,

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Agnes Elizabeth, Phoebe Jannett, Mary May and George Richard.





# Various Peace Strategies by the Mormon Leaders

In July, 1866, Indians took Thomas Hundley's oxen and a cow from his corral in Heber. The scouts in the mountains saw the tracks of their horses the day before the raid and warned the militia. Parties of four, on horseback, were ordered out to track the Indians down. Hundley's cattle were stolen while the militia parties were preparing to leave. One of the parties, composed of Andrew Ross, Joseph Parker, Isaac Cummings, and Sidney Carter later found their trail and followed them over the eastern ridge to their camp on the Duchesne River.<sup>6</sup>

The scouts made their first contact with the Indians when they noticed a thin wisp of smoke curling skyward from within a thick stand of timber. At the sight of this they stopped, dismounted, and after tethering their horses crept as quietly as possible down the hill towards the thicket. These were three Indians. Two slept while the third, who was standing guard, was busy cutting up one of the two cattle which had been butchered. The scouts each picked a man, and at the count of three all fired. Two of the Indians were killed, while the third got away in the timber.<sup>7</sup>

2 While part of the militia stood guard in the valley others were engaged in trying to make peace with the Indians. Early in the spring of 1866 Church president Brigham Young asked Al Huntington, of Heber, to ride out to the reservation on a peace mission. Huntington, an interpreter, was to go alone, contact Blackhawk, prevail upon him to cease stealing and killing and tell him that Brigham Young wanted to prevent blood from being

<sup>6</sup>James Lindsay, *op. cit.*, pp. 8 ff.

<sup>7</sup>William Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup>James Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

shed.<sup>8</sup> Although it appeared to be a dangerous mission, President Young promised him that he would not be harmed.

The Indians were surprised to see a lone man come in among them. Blackhawk and most of his braves were not there, but those that were soon formed an angry throng about Huntington. He tried to deliver his message, but the Utes were too angry to listen. In desperation he quit talking, drew his pistols, cocked them, and sat down. Just at this instant a runner came in bringing word that Sanpitch, a chief, had been killed by the whites. This news further incensed the Indians, and Sanpitch's squaw came up shouting, "Kill the Mormon quick, I want to eat his heart while it is still warm!"

At this Sowiette, an old blind chief, stepped into the circle and said, "You Indians ought to be ashamed. You are like coyotes gathered around a sheep, ready to eat it up. This is a brave man who has come here all alone to tell us Brigham doesn't want to kill Indians. He wants peace, and you all know he is our friend." The angry circle then broke up, and one by one the Indians slipped furtively away leaving Huntington to return as he had come—alone.

3 The Mormon's second peace overture took the form of a gift. Brigham Young ordered William Wall to organize an expedition to take one hundred head of cattle to the Utes on the reservation. Wall chose ten members of his cavalry company together with fourteen others and started out on May 27, 1866.<sup>9</sup> Upon arrival at Indian Agency Headquarters on the Duchesne River it was discovered that the Indians had gone east to hide their families in preparation for an extended war against the whites.<sup>10</sup> An Indian runner was sent out to call them back and to tell them of the cattle the Mormons had

<sup>9</sup>William Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup>McDonald, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

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## Various Peace Strategies used by the Mormon Leaders contd

### Mormon Peace Strategies continued

(4) LDS President Brigham Young promoted the dictum among the Mormon Members of the LDS Church to "Feed the Indians rather than fight them"

(5) Brigham Young also urged the Provo Mormon Settlers to give back to the Indians, lands near Utah Lake and near the mouth of the Provo River so that they could have easy access to their former hunting and fishing grounds. (see Popular History of Utah, by Orson F. Whitney, 1916, Des. News Press; P.

(6) Brigham Young urged Joseph Stacy Murdock (the First Presiding Bishop of - Heber Utah) to marry his Indian Daughter, Parnetta. so that the Utes Tribe might look more kindly toward the white settlers of Heber area.

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